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Ontario Women's Directorate

NEWSRELEASE

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ONTARIO GOVERNMENT HELPING WOMEN GET BETTER JOBS
Promoting Women's Economic Independence

QUEEN'S PARK – The Ontario government today announced funding that will enable women to receive pre-apprenticeship training as industrial electricians at Algonquin College in Ottawa through the government's Women In Skilled Trades Program (WIST).

"Our government is committed to helping women learn the skills they need to secure good jobs and become economically independent," said Sandra Pupatello, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues. "WIST is also helping to address Ontario's skills shortages by offering training in trades that are in high demand in specific areas."

Algonquin College will receive $186,183 from the Ontario Women's Directorate to deliver the pre-apprenticeship training in the industrial electrical course for up to 17 women. Classes start in March.

"I am very pleased that our government has made this a priority for women in the Ottawa area," said Jim Watson, MPP for Ottawa West-Nepean. "This program provides essential tuition fees for women who would not otherwise be able to afford this kind of training and prepares them for well-paying jobs with local industries."

The WIST program targets unemployed and low-income women and provides pre-apprenticeship training in a range of skilled trades. It includes in-school training and a paid on-the-job work placement with local employers. Government funding covers the women's tuition fees and other costs related to the program such as supplies.

"We know first-hand how valuable our WIST graduates are," said Udo Friesen, manager of Algonquin's Physical Resources Department. "Last year we hired two of our graduates to help our full-time electrical staff and they were excellent workers. I would have no hesitation in recommending these women to any potential employer."

The WIST program supports a variety of training programs at five other locations: General Carpentry at Georgian College in Barrie; New Home Service Technician/ General Carpentry at the Centre for Skills Development and Training in Burlington; General Carpentry at Conestoga College in Guelph; Welding at La Cité collégiale in Hawkesbury; and Native Residential Construction at Northern College in Moosonee.

For further information about the program at Algonquin College call Colette Garvin at 613-727-4723, ext. 1221, or visit www.algonquinecollege.com.

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